

Sand Island Self-guided Historical Tour

1. Bachelor's Officer's Quarters (Bravo and Charlie)

Constructed in 1957-58 for pilots, navigators and crews of the DEW Line. Now refurbished as the new guest quarters.

2. Midway House

The Refuge Manager now resides upstairs in the former OIC (Officer-In-Charge) House. The downstairs has displays on Midway's history including the secret meeting in 1969 between Pres. Nixon and Republic of South Vietnam Pres. Thieu.

3. Senior Officer's Quarters

Renowned Ford architect Albert Kahn designed these homes, the Midway House, and the Mall/Theatre complex in 1941.

4. Gooneyville Lodge

This is the approximate location of the Pan American Hotel, a prefabricated elegant structure, that saw elite guests such as Ernest Hemingway between the years of 1936 and 1941.

5. Midway Mall

Built from 1941 to 1944, this recreation complex hosted USO stars like Betty Hutton and Boris Karloff in the 40's. In the 60's it saw some remodeling including the large Navy Exchange (located where the library is today) and the E.M. Club (now the All Hands Club)

6. Midway Memorial

Both the 5 inch guns fired by the Marines and the giant gooney statue pay tribute to the resilience of the defenders of Midway and its native inhabitants respectively.

7. Japanese Markers

These mysterious stones mark the loss of Sakurai Matagora and four others who vanished in thier vessel off Midway in 1911. These are only memorial stones as there are no graves here.

8. Saltwater Pumping Station

This diesel powered plant operated as part of Midway's submarine base in 1944.

9. Seaplane Ramps

The Navy launched Consolidated Catalina PBY seaplanes off these ramps starting in 1940. We still use the ramp in the inner harbor to launch small boats, and the northern ramp although broken is used by Monk Seals as a favored haul out site.

10. Instant Pillbox

Marines manned these obsolete WWI tank turrets with machine guns, entering through a hidden underground tunnel.

11. Seaplane Hangar

Originally twice its current size, it suffered considerable damage from the shelling Dec. 7th 1941 and again June 4th 1942.

12. Torpedo Overhaul Shops

In 1941, both steam and electric powered torpedo shops, as well as a parachute loft, occupied these buildings.

13. Command Post

On the evening of December 7, 1941, a Japanese shell entered this "bombproof" command center and power plant, killing First Lt. George Cannon, the first Marine to receive the Medal of Honor in WWII.

14. Marine Barracks

Now condemned, Marines lived in these barracks during WWII.

During the DEW line operations, flight crews were housed here.

15. Underground Shelter

This bunker protected supplies from enemy bombardment.

16. Gun Emplacements

Gun batteries A, C and D once held 5 inch guns and fired at both sea and air targets. These were used to defend in 1941-42.

17. Ammo Shelter

Built in the 50's, troops could quickly load planes with ordnance as they pulled-up along the runway.

18. Ammo Huts

These three Quonset huts held munitions for the defenders during WWII, and were easily accessed by the gun batteries along the western beach.

19. Pillbox

Uncovered in 1997, Marines once scanned the shoreline in search of approaching commandos or invaders from pillboxes like this. Another pillbox can be seen from the overlook along the Waldron, or South Beach cart trail.

20. Cemetery

Four of the five stones in this perplexing graveyard display the names of doctors buried at Midway.

21. Radar Buildings

Both the underground building on the hilltop and the small cinder block building by the satellite dish served as the new technology radar facilities during WWII.

22. "New" Command Post

Constructed in 1945, this NQM structure operated as a Cold War naval communications station.

23. Main Hangar

This hangar, still used today was built in the late 50's to accommodate large aircraft such as the "Willy Victors" that flew as part of the DEW line. These aircraft were state of the art radar planes that used to fly 24 hours/7days a week between here and ADAK to warn of impending soviet attacks.

24. Cable Buildings

Established in 1903, approximately 30 Commercial Pacific

Cable Company staff members inhabited this compound and contributed to the sending of the first worldwide telegraph message.